

University Senate Research Committee Meeting

(online)

26 February, 2021

1:00 PM

In Attendance: C. Bonneau, S. Gaffen, D. Harrell, M. Hravnak, M. Holland, M. McCall, P. Morel, R. Rutenbar, D. Salcido, L. Rodzicz, S. Sant, M. Scott, A. Sethi, P. Smolinski, V. So, W. Yates,

The minutes from the 29 January 2021 meeting stand were approved as submitted.

The committee welcomed Sarah Gaffen, Professor of Medicine and Immunology, to the meeting. Dr. Gaffen gave a presentation on the Junior Academic Mentoring (JAM) program that she and John Alcorn (Associate Professor of Pediatrics) have established to provide junior faculty working in immunology with a peer support group and informational sessions on career development topics. The slides that she presented are provided with these minutes.

Picture a Scientist showing:

The date for the panel discussion has been set for April 8th at 2 PM. There was discussion about who should be included in the panel discussion. We have asked Sharon Shattuck – the producer/Director – to participate. Dr. Christine Schmidt from the University of Florida is also able to participate. She is Chair of the Bioengineering Department there and she has successfully recruited a diverse group of faculty to her department.

Other suggestions were Jimmy Martin (Dean of Engineering); Naudia Jonassaint (Vice Chair for Diversity and Inclusion, Department of Medicine); Nicole Kaminski (Graduate student and President of the BGSA)

Action Item: Penny and Shilpa will finalize the panel composition and will coordinate with Lori Molinaro and the film company to make arrangements for the viewing and panel webinar

Research Report from Rob Rutenbar

Covid 19 update

R. Rutenbar gave an update on the situation and stated that the University is following state and county guidelines. The number of cases are down and the Greensburg campus has been moved to the Guarded level. The students are back and there are no concerns at present.

Pitt has been approved as a vaccine distribution site but has yet to receive any vaccines. R. Rutenbar encouraged everyone to fill out the vaccine survey, which he admitted was not an ideal document.

There was a question about how things would change once we moved to Guarded position. M Holland stated that whereas at present gatherings are limited to 25 people, in the guarded state gathering sizes will be based on a fraction of the total occupancy of a particular venue.

COI Rollout for 2021

R. Rutenbar asked Bill Yates to provide and update on the new online COI system. B. Yates presented data on last year's on line COI procedure, known as MyDisclosures. This was very successful and, although it was billed as a pilot year, all units participated and there was a 99.9% completion rate. Some glitches were noted, in particular the merging of UPMC and Pitt records was not seamless and there was confusion among supervisors concerning how to manage approvals. In addition, delaying completion to July 15 created some issues for some people who were not around during the summer.

Improvements for this year include a new HR system which will be better able to match Pitt and UPMC records. A new supervisor center has been set up on the site and training for supervisors will be offered. This will include a review of COI policies, management of the system and description of disclosures required from outside agencies. All of the data entered from last year will be included in this year's form. Two new questions have been added to this year's form concerning academic appointments at other universities and research funding or support comes from outside sources.

The new form will be launched on March 15 and will need to be completed by April 15 2021

Data management Discussion

R Rutenbar reported that the Box transition has been delayed by one year to facilitate the automatic transfer. P. Morel asked about the plans to create a data repository system at Pitt. R. Rutenbar stated that they had been focused on the Box transition but they plan to work on this with Pitt IT and the CRC.

D. Salcido asked about sensitive/clinical data and how these would be handled. R. Rutenbar said they are working on some cloud-based solutions for this.

S. Sant asked whether there was a service for authentication of cell lines on campus. She was unable to find one recently and had to send cell lines to another university for testing. R. Rutenbar said he would look onto is, he was not sure if there was a service but he will make inquiries.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00pm. The next Research Committee meeting will be on 26th March 2021 at 1:00 pm.

Minutes submitted by P. Morel and S. Sant